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September 8, 2003

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, MD
Director and Chief Medical Officer

**SUBJECT: KING/DREW MEDICAL CENTER SURGERY TRAINING PROGRAM
ACCREDITATION**

On August 26, 2003, your Board instructed the Department of Health Services (DHS) to report back on the status of the accreditation of the surgery training program at King/Drew Medical Center.

The Department has been in communication with the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) to clarify the recent correspondence regarding the surgery training program. Under the ACGME rules, the program has 30 days from the receipt of the ACGME's August 25 letter informing the facility that it had made a determination of summary withdrawal to request that the Residency Review Committee (RRC) reconsider this action. This response letter is due to the ACGME no later than September 24. The RRC will then review the request for reconsideration and make a ruling within 14 days of receipt of this request, which would mean that the Department would know of the ACGME's determination by October 8.

Given the fact that the medical school has the opportunity to request reconsideration of the ACGME's ruling, the emphasis of both the hospital and the medical school has been to take the necessary actions and put together the appropriate documentation to support the request for reconsideration. I have been, and will continue to be, directly involved in the development of this request. To that end, the following steps have been taking to correct the deficiencies that were identified in the surgery training program.

- The Chief of Surgery and Program Director of the residency program have been removed and new leadership has been appointed to oversee the surgery program.

- The facility's Graduate Medical Education Committee will be regularly auditing the training programs at King/Drew Medical Center to ensure all residents are in appropriately accredited training slots. I will regularly review these reports.
- I will be meeting this week with the facility and the medical school to determine the status of the two probationary residents who were in non-accredited training positions.
- The Department's new item management system will include a central monitoring function to ensure that facilities do not hire more residents than are accredited for specific training programs.
- The Department's Audit and Compliance Division will conduct annual audits of each training program at King/Drew Medical Center to assure the facility is in compliance with training program requirements related to the number of accredited residency positions.
- I have engaged several individuals, not affiliated with the County, to conduct an outside review of the surgery residency program. Among these experts are the incoming President of the American College of Surgeons and the Chair of the Department of Surgery at the University of California, Irvine.

I believe that the facility and medical school have taken significant steps of corrective action to improve and strengthen the surgery program. It is my hope that the ACGME will take these actions into consideration when evaluating the request for reconsideration of the program withdrawal. In the event the ACGME rejects the request for reconsideration, the expectation is that the program's accreditation would be withdrawn effective June 30, 2004.

As I noted above, the focus of the facility and medical school has been on retaining the program's accreditation. Based on the outcome of the request for reconsideration, the Department and Drew University will take the steps necessary to place the residents and to establish a plan to ensure the continued provision of surgical services at King/Drew Medical Center.

I will keep you informed as to the status of this matter. Please let me know if you have any questions.

TLG:ak

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors